

Swede Colonel, Cited by U. S., Had Hawk Data

By the Associated Press

Swedish Air Force Col. Stig Erik Wennerstrom, arrested as a Soviet spy in Stockholm, was cited by the United States Government for "exceptionally meritorious conduct" during his assignment here as Sweden's Air Attaché from 1952 to 1957.

Now Col. Wennerstrom, back home in a Defense Ministry post, has been accused of furnishing the Soviet Union with military data on Sweden and "other countries," presumably including the United States.

The job gave him access to whatever secrets were involved in the Swedish Army's purchase of the United States Army Hawk surface-to-air missile system in 1960.

The Hawk is highly prized here for its capability for downing low-flying aircraft or missiles.

The State Department said Col. Wennerstrom was presented the Legion of Merit in December 1957, six months after he completed his assignment here. The award is considered a standard recognition for senior military attaches of friendly countries after completion of their tours of duty, the Department said.

The Wennerstrom citation said he "distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct as senior attaché in the furtherance of amicable relationships between the Royal Swedish Air Force and the United States Air Force from April, 1952 to June 1957."

"Through his good will, understanding and co-operation, Col. Wennerstrom has contributed immeasurably to Swedish-American friendship," the citation added.

After Col. Wennerstrom's return to Stockholm, the Swedish and American Governments announced on November 11, 1960, that negotiations had been completed for the sale of the Hawk missile system.

The terms of the sale were not disclosed, but a good deal of information about the Hawk and its capabilities was available in fact sheets put out by the United States Defense Department. Presumably the facts released were believed already known to the Soviet Union.

For example, the solid-fuel Hawk was said to be capable of destroying supersonic targets flying at both low and medium altitudes. The missile was said to have successfully hit targets from treetop levels to over 60,000 feet.

Hawk can be fired rapidly from either a fixed or mobile battery site.

Military observers here are not aware that the Soviet Union has a similar ground-to-air missile system, but it is presumed the Russians have prepared defenses against low-flying, high-speed nuclear aircraft and missiles.

CPYRGHT